Perfuasives from an inordinate love
Of ye Worlds to GOD. By Mr B. P. 1695.

Pratt Invent: P. Drapentier Sc.

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A Persuasive FROM THE CREATURES, To a Perfect RESIGNATION OF THE WILL TO GOD'S.

By *B. Pratt*, of *Merton Coll. Oxon.*

An Inordinate Love of this cheating World, is attended with only Superficial Joys, which end in Pain and Repentance. Senec. de Beat.

Nothing but an entire Consignation to the Dictates of Right REASON, *can make you* TRULY *Happy.* idem Alib.

The Second Edition Corrected. To which is added an APPENDIX.

LONDON, Printed for *G. Conyers* at the *Golden Ring*, *W. Newton* over against Saint *Bartholomew's-Close-Gate*, and *J. Pero* at the *White Swan*, in *Little-Britain*, 1695.

A Perfuafive

FROM THE

CREATURES,

To a Due

RESIGNATION

OF THE

WILL

TO

GOD.

TO THE
Right Honourable
The LADY *M. H.*
OF
NORFOLK.

MADAM,

THE Honour I receive by Acquaintance with YOU, and the Illuſtrious Vertues with which You

 are,

are, I know [Beyond a Stranger's Credit] ſo Extraordinarily Bleſs'd, has [ſince the Departure of that Friend [in Obedience to whom this *Triſle* was at firſt deſign'd] peculiarly obliged me to preſent it at Your Ladyſhip's Feet.

I am ſorry, for Your ſake, it is not as I could wiſh it Compos'd, [I have Higher Thoughts on this Subject, which I cannot yet expreſs.] But Your Honour will conſider, 'tis a Work of YOUTH; and for ſeveral Private Reaſons by none Review'd till

till it paſs'd from the Preſs.

I am not for Tedious *DEDICATIONS*; in them I had rather ſpeak Leſs than More than the Ingenuous Modeſty of ſuch Perſons as Your LADYSHIP will permit. [For You are above the want of an ENCOMIUM, and I may be eaſily thought guilty of that Flattery I hate,] ſo I would conclude [with my Hearty PRAYERS to *Almighty GOD*, that it may pleaſe Him to be ſtill Your GUIDE,

till You arrive at Eternal Rest.]

Your Ladyship's

And RELATIONS

Most Obedient,

Humble Servant,

Kensington, Jan. 12. 169⅘.

B. P.

To

To the Worthy READER.

THE *ſubſequent* Introduction *is an Apology ſo ſufficient for this ſlender Work, that a Formal* Preface *would, I think, have been almoſt Superfluous here,* [*though by Cuſtom you ſhould expect it.*] *But I have further to ſay,*

That, I would ask your friendly Cenſure hereon. For, I preſume, a Piece is then

Accompliſh'd, when it chiefly anſwers the Underſtanding of the Perſon for whom 'twas particularly deſign'd. —— *This Work was at firſt compos'd, not to Teach the Learned, but for* Philomuſe [*though Great, BUT Qualify'd according to IT's Language and Sence*] *my Intimate Friend, to whom I might always be Free: ſo that if I Riſe and Fall, nay, often change the Style of, and aſcend not too High in this Divine Diſcourſe, the Reaſons which cauſe will excuſe* ——

That the Largeneſs of Sentences, and ſeeming Excurſions of the Book, muſt be imputed to the Vigour of that Unruly

Flame

To the Reader.

Flame which incens'd me to This.

That I could not but ſometimes Expreſs my ſelf in the ſence of ſome Authors I have MIX'D my ſelf with.

That I have follow'd the Method of Sir Roger L'Eſtrange's Seneca, *in my Tranſlation of thoſe ſelect Scraps of St.* Auſtin *which end the Advice: And,*

That I am truly

Yours,

M. Coll.
Nov. 11.
1694.

B. P.

To the Ingenious Mr. *P.* On Information of his Design to Attempt [*Perſuaſives to God*, &c.]

SUch a Diſcourſe from Thee!
Proceed, Aſpiring Youth! Be Free,
Accept the Dictates of the DEITY.

Think, in Old Age, and when Thou canſt not Taſte
A Mortal Joy, about to Breathe thy Laſt,
What Conſolation, what Celeſtial Bliſs,
Such Juvenile Performances as THIS
Will then afford thy Soul!

J. M. *B. D.*

Perſuaſives
FROM THE
CREATURE
To a Perfect
RESIGNATION
Of the
WILL to *GOD*'s.

Deareſt *Philomuſe!*

COnquer'd by your frequent Importunities, at laſt I'm Reſolv'd, and you've a Preſent of my Attempts, retarded till now, not

not through want of Reaſons to Pleaſe you, you have ſo much Oblig'd Me, that I am proud to tell the World what you, I hope, are ſure of, That there is not any Earthly Comfort more affects me, than Deſires that aſpire to Serve *Philomuſe*, but a ſenſe of my own Incapacity to write Worthily on a Subject ſo Noble as THIS.

So that from admiring before you had not my Pretences Sooner, you may deſcend to wonder Now, in ſo Nice an Age as This, I dare thus be Rude.

But

But I would tell you, Tho' for your ſake only I could endure to be in Print, after long Deliberation, I believe, That ſince an Occaſion has happen'd which juſtly requires this Diſcourſe from my Hands, particularly 'tis my Duty, [whereas beſides I have been all along Bleſs'd with Extraordinary Favours from the Divine Goodneſs] I proſecute that Juſt Thought firſt ſtarted in my Mind, then Back'd on by your Pious Entreaty.

I think I ſhall not be ſo vain to value the Cenſures of All Men; though indeed, *Philomuſe*, at firſt I fear'd, for

for me not in Orders, and ſo Young, to pretend to This — 'twas Bold.

But notwithſtanding I conſider'd I am not one of, or yet deſign for the Clergy, and that ALL I now write may [even to Me] when I'm capable of Better, appear a Mean Performance, I found not but the precedent Incentives to This, were ſtill Motives to follow the Deſign. For,

Since Inanimate Beings (according to the *Pſalmiſt*, &c.) ſhould Praiſe God, and the Age we war in; *Philomuſe* and my Self cannot be too much reminded of our great-

Pſal. 148.

eſt

eſt Concerns. It again occurs, That I fed at the * *Head* of GOD's Streams, and above the Claſſes of Meaneſt Things, ſhould immediately (for I know not when my Flight will be) do ſomething for GOD our Father in this kind, eſpecially to it mov'd by an Uncommon (methinks) Impulſe, attended on by Convenient Time and Place, be it only fit for ſuch as I [not yet fully confirm'd in a Habit of Inordinate Love.]

* *Univerſ.*

But I wave further Apologies for a Deſign, I hope, will Excuſe it ſelf, (though I might further tell Thoſe that

that argue againſt the Need of it, The large Diſcourſes on this Subject, long ſince extant, That ALL Men ſhould employ their Time not as it pleaſes Others, but their own Genius to a good End. —— And becauſe ſome have been Zealous on a Subject for *GOD*, is not a Reaſon ſufficient others ſhould deſiſt from the ſame. The Almighty *GOD* (whoſe Glory in all our Actions we ſhould aim to Celebrate) is ſo charmingly Excellent (even to us) when conſider'd, as diſſolves the Proudeſt of his Creatures into a Regret and * Reſolutions, makes them,

* Beyond themſelves.

them, when loſt in Admiration of his Wiſe Diſpenſations, not only exclaim with the Apoſtle, *O! the Depth of the Riches!* —— with the Pſalmiſt, *Oh! that men would therefore praiſe the Lord!* —— but exſtaſy'd, to *pant like the Hart*, for numberleſs Companions, to leave that fallen World, to know to joyn with them in Eternal *Halelujah's.*

Rom. 11. 33.
Pſal. 107. v. 8, 15, 21, 31.
Pſal. 42. 1. & 119. 5. & 150. 6.

To wave, I ſay, further Excuſes: Though I attempt *Perſuaſives from the Creature*, I mean not, we ſhould not uſe theſe Creatures of *GOD* at all. I am not ſuch a *Stoick*, to

Sect. 1.

to ſuppoſe you can or muſt wholly contemn theſe Created Goods. Nor believe I, thoſe things are only to be us'd which we abſolutely need: The Man who can ſo Command himſelf, is his own Maſter indeed, but no better than his Fellow-Chriſtians. *GOD* ſaw that ALL his Creation was good in themſelves; Dares Man then think them not? —— Why ſhould we abſtain? *ALL things are lawful.* —Were they not, Fleſh and Blood would preſume themſelves worſe then (Pardon the Compariſon) Tantaliz'd, ſhow'd Things endow'd with Appetites

1 Cor. 10. 23, 26. Rom. 14. 14.

tites for [unleſs rid of them by Habits of Abſtinence] and Powers to reach them, then puniſh'd by the Indulgent Father of the Univerſe!

The Moſt Wiſe *GOD* made ALL Things (as was told you) *GOOD in their kinds to be us'd*, that in the Enjoyment we might more readily be tranſported with the Love of Him we cannot duly Admire. But all Things are not Expedient; for the Devil has help'd us to find out *many Inventions*, (yet if we can uſe them to the End they were by *GOD* deſign'd, we are not hurt.)

Heb. 10. 24.

1 Cor. 10. 23. 2 Cor. —

I in-

I intend not to Argue for the Vices of the Times: Lovers of them, are Men ſick, or they would not, like Women with Child, Long, for their Ruine. *God* no more created Appetites for thoſe (as all that conſider the *Divinity*, will affirm,) than He did Death; and yet you ſee, *Philomuſe*, we [free to act] have took care to bring them on us.

If 'tis ask'd, Why He ſuffers them? ——— For the Tryal of us, that we may glory in the Conqueſt, when our Souls ſhall be free.

Jam. 1. 23. *ibid. v.* 13, 14.

No,

No, *Philomuſe*, my Deſign is not, you ſhould not rightly uſe *God's* good Creation; but I would not you abuſe that, or wrong your ſelf; I would not have you borne down with the Thoughts or Enjoyments of the *Creatures*; I would not have you loſe your ſelf in the Love of them, or reſt on what will fall and deceive you. *Sect.* 2.

By the *Creatures*, I mean, ALL *GOD*'s Works, with their admirable Concomitants, Learning, Arts, Wits, Good Nature, *&c.* For they are *all* Rays of the Divine Perfection, and come from Him; —

Him; —and you ſhould uſe them not as ſo many Fetters to enſlave you to them, but as Stars to lead you to the Deity.

Thus (but let not the Witty think I only diſſuade Others, like the Tailleſs Fox, from what, perhaps, I've loſt my Self, that's too impious—) when you ſee a Beauty, with all the Charms a Mortal can have, you ſhould conclude, That (as a certain Saint did, I remember I have read of, who Dining with a Perſon of Honour at Table with his Lady, look'd ſo intently on her Incomparable Form, that nothing could per-

In *Anthol. Hiſt. p.* &c.

perſuade her Lord to Admiration, but Knowledge of his Age [a Preventive, ſure, againſt his committing Adultery in's Heart] why he look'd ſo wiſhfully on her. He ask'd? The good Old Father, with exalted Eyes, *Lord!* ſays he) *if a Creature is ſo Fine, what art* THOU *Thy Self! or we ſhall be, when at the Reſurrection!* —But no further. Pſal. 139. 13.

All the Oriental Luſtres of the Richeſt Gemms; all the Inchanting Beauties of Exterior Shapes, the Exquiſiteneſs of Figures, the Lovelyneſs of Colours, the Harmony of Sounds, the Light and

and Clarity of the Enlivening Sun; the Raviſhing Form and Order of All, proceed from *GOD*. All the Heroick Vertues of the Braveſt Minds, with the Purity and Quickneſs of the Higheſt Intellects, are *all* (as Sir *Owen Feltham* ſomewhere ſays) but Emanations from the Supreme Deity, and were by it deſign'd not to enſlave and detain our Paſſions, but to Refine and Exalt our Conceptions; to perſuade us there is certainly in *GOD* much more than we can either ſee or comprehend: And therefore the Seraphick Mr. *Boyle* aſſures you, That (to

Pſal. 100. 3

(to uſe his own Ingenious Expreſſion) "If you'd make "the righteſt Uſe of Fading "Beauties, *&c.* you muſt (as "was hinted before) conſi- "der GOD and Them, as "you were wont to do your "Miſtreſs's Picture and its "CryſtalCover; where, tho' "that Native Glaſs were "pure and lovely, and very "richly Edg'd; yet to gaze "on it, was not the chiefeſt "Buſineſs of your Eye, nor "did you in it terminate "your Sight, but greedily "look thorough and beyond "it, upon the Adored Image "that ſolid Veil betray'd. *Ser. Love.*

Sect. 4. I cannot (*a*) here attempt Deſcriptions on one Ray of the Superlative Excellence; —— my weak Eyes are far more able to gaze on the Meridian Sun, than they are on a Glympſe of His Supereminent Beauty, [a (*b*) Beauty ſo vaſtly Tranſporting,

(*a*) *Non poſſum dicere quia nec videre poſſum, tamen aliquid non impudenter dico qui ex ſcripturis dico.* Aug. Ser. *&c.*

(*b*) The ſight of HIM would let in Joys, and then create Deſires too mighty for Mortality to bear. The raviſh'd Soul, if ſhewn ſuch Excellence as This, forthwith would hate, ſo eagerly ſhe'd break thoſe Leaſhes that confin'd her to the Body, ſo prevent her Flight to that Tranſporting Good ſhe wiſh'd to be united with. And therefore GOD tells *Moſes* (when he importun'd Him for a Glance of what he knew was Inconceivable) he could not ſee his Face: For, *none could ſee his Face and live*, Exod. 33. 20.

that

that it makes the pretty Cherubs, *&c.* veil theirs in a Holy Place. His makes Heaven!] Nor ſhall I now offer Taſtes of that Milk and Honey which flow in the Land of *Canaan*. Thoſe Pledges of a future Happy Eternity, which God vouchſafes to them in this Veil of Tears, who wholly reſign to Him, the Pleaſures of their Beatifick State you ſhall gueſs anon. Iſa. 6. 2.

I ſhould now tell you, as a *Perſuaſive from the Creature*, That 'tis as Reaſonable, as I ſhall prove it Neceſſary, we ſet not our Affections too *Sect.* 5.

much on Things Below; but make the Beauty of *God*'s Creatures [what I told you they were chiefly deſign'd for] Prevailing Incentives to the Love of Him. For the Almighty *God*, that Supreme *Ens* and Wiſdom it ſelf, with whom is *fullneſs of Joy*, and *at whoſe Right-hand are Pleaſures for evermore*, made us to be ſupremely Happy, People for Himſelf. And if we will not make uſe of thoſe excellent *Means* He has been pleas'd to offer, that we may be ſo, an Eternity of Repentance will not reconcile us to the Heaven we loſe, when this World is no more.

1 Cor. 2. 9.
Heb. —
Heb. 4. 1.
Iſa. 66. 24.

But

But to haſten from ſo dreadful a Conſequence of Diſobedience to the Divine Will, that you may be more willingly attracted, *Philomuſe*, to your own Salvation, conſider, the Mercy of *God*, who not only deſign'd theſe Terreſtrial Beauties, as Ladders to exalt you to your proper Center of Content, but to demonſtrate further, That He did not only at firſt intend, but ſtill condeſcends to deſire you ſhould be Happy for ever with him: He has withal made ALL his Creation, in their fulleſt Enjoyment, utterly unable to ſa- *Sect.* 6. Pſal. 119.— Iſa. 65. 1, 2, 3.

tisfie the Soul of Man, that ſo you might never reſt till to that Center you arrive.

Pſ. 31. 21. Iſa. 63. 3, &c. [And to encourage us on our Way, He (*a*) Grieves when we ſlip, raiſes us by Stratagems of Mercy when we fall, lights us by his Word, diſſembles Anger when we wilfully Err, leads us with that Hand might have ſtruck us into Hell; and when forc'd [to prevent our immediate Ruine] corrects us with ſo Paternal a Concern,

Pſ. 30. 5, Eph. 4. 30. Pſ. 86. 15.

(*a*) God's Grief at the Sinner is ſuch, as pleas'd him to offer His only Son a Sacrifice for Man's Salvation; which, without producing the leaſt Diſcompoſure, cauſes Effects of the moſt ſenſible Pity.

as

as would break our Hearts, might we know.

The *Royal Pſalmiſt*, after deep Contemplation of this, in an *Epiphonema*, patherically exclaims, *Lord! what is Man, that* Thou *art ſo mindful of him? or the Sons of Men, that* Thou *regardeſt them?* Surely 'tis becauſe GOD is the LORD, and *changes not*, that we are not rather conſumed.—— *O! that therefore Men would praiſe the* Lord *for his Goodneſs, and declare the Wonders that* He *does for the Children of Men! O Lord! the very Heavens ſhall praiſe Thy Wondrous Works.* (For) *O LORD*

Pſ. 8. 4.
Mal. 3. 6.
Pſ. 19. 14, 15. & 107. *from v.* 1. *to the end.*
Lam. 3. 22.
Pſ. 18. 50. & 89. 5. *ibid.* 9. —— & 34. 3. & 40. 6. & 66. ——

GOD of HOSTS! who is like unto THEE?]

Sect. 7. Now, this Diſability of the Creatures for true Satiſfaction, with that ſad Anxiety that attends their Enjoyment, though a Subject (as others) has been before diſcourſed on, ſhall, ſince ſtill I ſee we diſquiet our ſelves in vain, by this Mite I
Pſ. 39.— humbly caſt [as *Perſuaſives from the Creature*] be fully diſplay'd.

I call each Exiſtence under the Sun, VANITY; for, its Fruition diſappoints, and Reſults cheats.

To

To confirm you in which, *Solomon*, *Homo* (as *Victorinus* ſtyles him) *Hominem Excedens*, the Wiſeſt Man that was, who by a * *Sedulous Search*, and *Practick Experience*, travers'd the World, neither wanted nor ſpar'd Means to ranſack *all*, in hope of Happineſs Below, with Me impartially conſents.

In diſplaying this *Vanity of Vanities*, I ſhall diſſect its ſeveral Parts, and accordingly treat; that on this *Sea of Trouble, Philomuſe*, you may leave *God* to ſteer, who will bring you to the Haven of Eternal Reſt.

* As the word in the Original ſignifies, *Eccleſ.* 1. 3. דָּרַשׁ chap. *ibid.* ver. 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18. chap. 2. ver. 10, 11.

Mat. 11. 28.

Sect. 8. *Man* then, the LORD of the *World*, is, [by Nature, ſince the Fall, ſo unworthy our inordinate Love, that we *but* fling away our Time, to *think* on Him, unleſs with Reſolution only to be Enamor'd of God, or to Beware of Him] when an Infant, like Wax, to be influenc'd by every Stamp of Vice: He walks in a vain Shadow, and diſquiets himſelf in vain; is as inconſtant as the Wind, and varies with every airy Noiſe: His pureſt Part's diſturb'd by's Body's Ills; and a ſad Dream, or cloudy Day, can change this wretched *Creature* into other Thoughts:

Pſ. 39. 13. Jer. 4. 22. Eccluſ. 9. 14, 15, 16, *&c.* 1 Cor. 1. 21.

An

An idle Story told him, makes him part with dearest Friends, and inconsiderately to wish their Death; nor can he be perſuaded (whatſoe'er they are) but they *muſt* merit that!

How ardently we love ſome common Goods, a Fit of Choler makes us ever hate? Our own Miſtakes makes others bad with us: So eaſily is Reputation loſt!

A Frown, a ſlip o' the Tongue, or ſome ſuch Nothing, makes us cancel all the Bonds of Secrecy and Truſt, and enter into Leagues with Enemies, not ended e'er they're broke! Our Favou-

Favourites do, with our Places, change; and we lov'd that Before, which makes us ſick to Day!

Thus is the Work of Heaven (to ſpeak in general) become (though not their Scorn [for they're All-good]) its Pity too, who ſo reſents our Beſt Performances Below, as Wits of th' Age look back on theirs when School-Boys,—Novices—

Sect. 9. Nor are we [but our Heavenly Father's *Love*] leſs Troubleſome to Him, than to our ſelves. Corruption mixes with our Pureſt Acts; we're ſhort in paying

paying Homage to our *God*, and ſin when we neglect. When Thoughts of Him [who's All-conſpicuous] we pretend, alas! we cannot Think aright. —— The Devil, if *he* offers us the Bait, we take it, though we knew the Conſequence; nay — many times prevent *him* by our Eagerneſs to Act. Eccl. 9. 16, 17.

Inclin'd to Piety, ſometimes we rudely ſeem to teach our Father what we want [as if He knew not, till we told Him our Neceſſities, or when to give us what we truly need] we Clowniſhly demand what *God* in *Mercy* will not let us have; Pſ. 56. 8. & 139. 2, 3.

have; and beg for preſent Vengeance on our Enemies He knows deſerves it not, or will be Penitent. However — we deny'd, are ſure there is No GOD, or that regards not US.

Pſ. 53. 1.

[—But, *Let me, LORD,* (ſays *Auſtin*) *wiſh for THEE alone! Allure my Longings with Thy Secret Raptures from Above, thoſe Pleaſures which Thou haſt reſerv'd and hid, as yet, from them that Truſt in THEE, that with inceſſant Pantings they may wiſh for THEE, leſt th' Inward Reliſh being indiſpos'd, may think that Bitter's Sweet!*]

Solil. c. 12.

We

We Fear what we ſhould Slight, but never Value what we moſt ſhould Dread: Like Birds, falſe Men of Clouts do fright, are taken yet by the deſtroying Ginn. We care to act our Sins in private, out of Mortal view, regardleſs of the Heavenly Judge that ſees. We Phyſick our diſtemper'd Carcaſſes, but mind not how our Soul's diſpos'd. Pſ. 139.

Or if we do, not with that Thoughtfulneſs we ought; or elſe, relying on our proper Strength, implore not Heaven's Aid. So we no ſooner got in Vertues Paths, are weary of them

them quite: Or if a ſecond time, to make amends, like
Iſa. 64. 6, *Jehu*, we attempt with ſpeed; alas! the Journey ſcarce begun, has tyr'd us. —— We ceaſe; — but then diſſatisfy'd, we force our ſelves a little forward; but with ſubtle care we ar'n't expos'd thereby.

Thus move we on a Cripple's pace, till unconſider'd Difficulties dark our Paths, and then, like (*a*) Travellers at Night, on un-

(*a*) An Allegorical Deſcription of the general Cauſes of *Deſpair*. Thoſe wretched People once miſtaken, do uſually hug their Errors, are perſuaded againſt others Expoſitions, and apply every hard Word of GOD to their own Vexation, *Iſa.* 8. 14.

known

known Roads remote, unable to return, or now proceed, with out-ſtretch'd Arms we grope, incredulous of Night-Directors; till at laſt ſome harmleſs Thunder dying in the diſtant Skie, diſtracts our fearful Minds, and we Deſpair, when in ſome diſmal Foreſt we are loſt, or from a Precipice in mighty Waters fall.

Our Beauty and our Wiſdom too, are vain; for they're imperfect, and will ſoon decay with Us they ſo adorn. Though Caſualties ſhould ſpare us, [which they ſeldom doe,] Age of neceſſity deſtroys: *Sect.* 10. Pſ. 39. 6, 12. Iſa. 40. 6, 7. Jam. 1. 10. 1 Pet. 1. 24.

deſtroys: Then how perplex'd our great Admirers are? A Blow or Bruiſe on th' Head, may ſpoil the Learned'ſt Maſter in Philoſophy, and ſubject him to thoſe before he ſcorn'd.

Our greateſt Senſual Pleaſures are but Vanity. Much Time we throw away in anxious Cares and Troubles to enjoy; and when we doe, we cannot as we would: our Torch will ſpeedily burn out, and we are vaniſh'd from our Earthly Joys: or elſe our jealous Mind ſuggeſts a thouſand Reaſons for our ſudden Loſs of what [poſſeſs'd of fully] but effeminates

Says *Martial, Quicquid amas cupias non placuiſſe nimis*, &c.

minates the Efforts of the Soul.

Depriv'd of what we doated on, our Soul's unſpirited, and in a torpid fright we much bewail the Loſs of Satisfactions that before, by long Poſſeſſions, and a near acceſs, [like My Lord (*a*) *Capel*'s Plant] contracted all their Charms; we now, as Pictures at a diſtance ſeen, miſtake for Excellently Fine; and then 'tis long before we are our ſelves again, or reliſh other Joys.

You know, my *Philomuſe*,

(*a*) The *Senſitive Plant* in His Honour's Garden at *Cue*, near *Richmond*.

that

that this and more is true. [To mention, by the bye, now what may be excus'd, that pretty * *Little Shadow* (as I us'd to call it) of the Greateſt FAIR: (I mean, the Perſon ſojourned with your Friend) [a Sign but to convince that GOD was near] when with extravagant Affection graſp'd, prov'd ſo indeed: —— 'Twas *REASON* hid Himſelf, and it was gone.]

*---*B.J. ad imp.* (Jul 4. *N*--- 92. *M.ob.F.*13. *N*---9¾.*T.*

Marcus Antoninus di. Ἄπλωσον σεαυτόν.

Sect. 11. And as the uſual Objects of our earthly Pleaſures are ſo Finite in their Nature, they are Few; the compaſs of theſe Satisfactions is more ſhort

ſhort than Life; none to be had, but what before we loathed. ——

—Verſamur ibidem atque Lucret.
inſumus uſque,
Nec nova vivendo procudi-
tur ulla voluptas.

Or thoſe we ſoon look over, and caſt by, like wither'd Flowers from our Boſoms we are weary of.

The Sacred Bonds of Friendſhip, whoſe Delights alone, even here on Earth, could they without Ceſſation be enjoy'd, might repreſent us Heaven, ſure would be declin'd by Thoughtful Men, but

but 'tis an Exerciſe of Vertues.

We often love our Second Selves (our Real Friends I mean) with ſuch Sincerity and Care, that Fortune ruins Both, when ſhe ſtrikes One; — and never gives Content [whatever Good ſhe ſends] but when (*a*) Serene and Free from Jealouſies, they are *Together* Bleſs'd.

Sect. 12. Riches and Honours too are alſo vain; they fail us in

(*a*) This is experienc'd in Perfect Friendſhip: Remember *David*, and his Concern at the dreadful News of his Brother's Death, 1 *Sam.* chap. 1. from ver. 17. to the end.

the

the deepeſt Need, and can't ſecure us from the Jaws of Death, nor mighty Stings of Conſcience. ——

Non Domus aut fundus non
Æris Acervus & Auri Hor.
Ægroto Domini deduxit
corpore Febres,
Non Animo curas. ——

If we but uſe our (a) Wealth, immediately they're gone; but if we keep them only, then we have 'em not! They're wing'd; and though a while, till they ſeduce us to Intemperance, we may poſſeſs

(a) *Omnis Pecunia Levis, fugax labilis, anguilarum & ſerpentum inſtar Lubrica.* C. Agrip.
* Κακῶν ἐπικαλυμμα ὁ πλοῦτος. Plat.

them,

them, they will flee away; and to the Care we had in getting them, add freſh and greater Troubles then.

But — I am weary of Deſcriptions, ſuch as theſe. If, *Philomuſe*, you'd further be inform'd, how Vain we are, and what we Toil about, contemplate Me.

Sect. 13. Our Life then, (to conclue *Perſuaſives*, That this World of GOD is vain to try our Vertue, and that we may aim at Heaven Above,) when but conſider'd, plainly does appear (as an Ingenious * Mr. *J. D.* in *A—Z.* * Author ſays) a Cheat to All Conſidering Men: And yet

yet ſuch Fools we are, we ever hope againſt Experience; believe to Morrow ſure will make amends for Yeſterday's Misfortunes, but in vain! This Day deceives us more than thoſe behind, lies worſe; for whilſt it flatters us with hopes of ſome new Satisfaction, it robs us of the preſent we poſſeſs'd! None therefore would live over Days are paſt, yet moſt (ſo ſilly are we) are in Expectation of new Joys from thoſe which are to come. ('Tis ſtrange! That from the Dregs of Life, we All ſhould look for Pleaſures or Contents the

firſt brisk Running never could produce!) Why ſhould we doat then on theſe Fallacies? or not immediately tranſplant our higheſt Love to GOD, by *Reſignation* to his Bleſſed *Will*? — But,

Sect. 14. I muſt deſire you to conclude, *Philomuſe*, That all I have ſaid to depretiate the Creatures Worth, which is wont to inveigle the Inconſiderate's Affections from their proper Object, to Death, was meant rather by way of Preparative, than Motive to conduct you from the Love of them to GOD [aiming (as

(as was told you by the preceding Diſcourſe) [not to Abuſe the Works of GOD, or thoſe Ingenious Beauties, ſome of which I have the the Honour to know, but] to Diſabuſe thoſe Men which doat on them to Exceſs, and rectifie their degraded Minds, that with compos'd and impartial Thoughts they may judge of the Counſel is advis'd.] For,

Though by Doating on the Creature, you affront it to the degree of Sin, when you give it that Reſpect which is due unto GOD, and are accordingly puniſh'd; *Sect.* 15.

though (I mean) you're convinc'd, That to neglect the Commands of GOD, is Death, I would not therefore only you *Reſign* to Him; that is a greater Fault than any of the World's; for which I perſuade you to ſhun it, and will prevent you the Charms which do truly pleaſe the Sovereign Wiſdom Commands. So that were You and I, *Philomuſe* to reap no Advantage from Submiſſion to *Him*, and *God* incapable [which cannot be granted] to overrule our Wills; though we were Objects now of his Hate; we have yet reaſon

to

to Obey Him: For, 'twas HE which Made us, (*not* to do *(a)* Him Service: Can a Man *(b)* be Profitable to *GOD*? but) purely out of Love, e're we were. [So little could we deſerve it, that we might be Happy with HIM. Pſ. 100. 10. Job 22. 2, 3. Rev. 4. 10.

Indeed, as the *Iſraelites*, to make them reſolve on returning to their Happy Land, ſtood in need of that cruel Bondage in *Egypt*, we often want the harſh Uſage *Sect.* 16.

(a) HE is above the *Need* of His Creatures Help.

(b) — *Quid enim Immortalibus atque Beatis, Gratia Noſtra queat*, &c. Lucret. ex Epic.

of an afflicting World to undeceive us in its Charms, that we may fly to God; it is not to aſſure you, we muſt therefore only aſpire to Him, [as if *God* needed to be recommended by his Creatures Defects! and ſo made them vain, that we might run to Him, to compleat the Happineſs of the Moſt Bleſſed *GOD!* Or, it is fit to make *Him* the Refuge of a Defeated Paſſion, whoſe Tranſcendencies entitle Him to more than the moſt Exalted and Entire! We have made our ſelves ſo frail by the Fall, that (as) the Seraphick Mr. *Boyle* will tell

tell you) we are unfit to procure, and ready to deſert our own Good, and neither *God*'s Excellence is a ſufficient Motive to carry our Addreſſes to Him, nor his Poſſeſſion a compleat Tye to intercept in us all Deſigns of Revolt: And therefore, in Mercy, we are us'd as froward Children are, who (on the one ſide) when their Mouths are out of Taſte, and they refuſe what is neceſſary for them, muſt not only have it offer'd, but forc'd on them, and be, as it were, made to receive it; and who (on the other ſide) muſt be reſtrain'd from Gad-

ding, when the Beauty of the Manſions they may live in, cannot invite their Abode.]

Sect. 17. The Chaſtiſement of *God* in this Probation-ſtate [as by all before was ſuggeſted unto you, is purely deſign'd for our *own Good*, and is an Effect of that Mercy which endures for ever, ſo ſhould tranſport us, without more to doe, through a true ſenſe of his Super-eminent Excellence, to an entire Reſignation to his Holy Will, [who not only *Made* us, and has therefore oblig'd us to Obey, (as before,) but continues to

to Love us, tho' *His Enemies.*] By whoſe generous Favours He condeſcends to aſſure He counts them none, unleſs they vanquiſh Obſtacles, as well as want Motives from us.

By *Reſignation* (to which I earneſtly perſuade you from an Inordinate Love of the Creature, which you ſee is Vain, Inconſtant, and not to be Rely'd on, Deceitful, of no Continuance, and therefore impoſſible to ſatisfie the Soul of Man,) I mean, a Univerſal Submiſſion or Conſignation to the WILL of *GOD*, ſo as not only to acquieſce, with as *Sect.* 18.

much Satisfaction as you can, under every Accident or Affliction in the World, with a ſtedfaſt Belief they proceed from that Unerring Wiſdom, and Paternal Hand, whence no Stroke lights ſooner, or falls heavier, or ſtays longer than the Occaſion that extorted it exacted; but to Rejoyce, and be exceeding glad at ALL that Pleaſes *GOD*; uſing This World as not abuſing it, (that is,) living in it, as ſeeing Him which is Inviſible.

Sect. 19. It conſiſts not with my Degree, to Philoſophize on the Nature of *GOD*, or from thence

thence to prove *GOD* is the Head-Sourſe of True Content, and Man's Proper End, into whom 'till he joyns, he can never have perfect Reſt, and ſo to confirm the Poſſibility and Neceſſity of Reſigning to Him: It has been the Buſineſs of ſome former Leaves to declare it. And beſides, That this is a Life of Probation, in which we are to fight out our Salvation by the Rules of *GOD*, or we ſhall periſh at laſt, and have not Leaſes of our Lives, is by all of Sence moſt ſeriouſly own'd. [Let it ſuffice to ſay, in Contradiction to Unthinking Men, That *GOD* is

is the Abſolute Firſt Being, and has therefore in his Rich Eſſence all the ſcatter'd Excellencies of Inferiour Ones, in a more perfect manner than themſelves have, with ſome peculiar Excellence of His Own beſides; and is therefore to be granted the *Supreme Good*, if ſo *He* is, that ſupports himſelf on the Baſis of his Own All-ſufficiency, and is therefore His Own End and Center, and is as Willing as Able to be alſo Man's. For the Nature of *GOD* involves, as in Notion and Conception, in Truth and Reality too, (as the Ingenious Mr. *Norris*, in

in his *Coll. of Miſſ.* p. 316. whence this Argument, in effect, is borrow'd, does affirm at large,) Abſolute and Infinite Perfection, and conſequently includes a Benificent and Communicative Diſpoſition; for this is a Perfection.

Nor does the Supreme Excellence of Almighty *GOD* only evince him Communicative, but to be the moſt Communicative and Self-Diffuſive of All Beings: For, as all Kinds, ſo all Degrees of Excellence muſt of neceſſity be included in a Being infinitely and abſolutely Perfect, ſuch as *GOD*. Therefore, HE is not only the

the moſt Communicative of All Beings, but will alſo communicate Himſelf in ſuch an ample Meaſure too, as perfectly to content the moſt Aſpiring Wiſh of Man. And this Willingneſs of *God*, That Man ſhould partake of His Fulneſs to the higheſt degree, we are further aſſur'd of from expreſs Revelations: Firſt, By *Words*; Wherein He declares Himſelf (*a*) Paſſionately deſirous of the Salvation

(*a*) *As I live* (*ſays Almighty* GOD) [when His Paternal Threats, through miſconſtruction had caus'd the fooliſh *Iſraelites* to deſpair of His Love] *I deſire not the Death of a Sinner, but that the Wicked would turn and live: Turn you! Turn you!* [How affectionately ſpoke!] *from your Evil Ways, for WHY* [O! moſt endearing Condeſcention, that THOU ſhouldſt *Reaſon* ſo with Us!] *WILL you DIE, Oh! Houſe of Iſrael?* Ezek. 3. 11.

of

of Man. Secondly, By Two Signal *Acts*: The conſigning to the World a Copy of His Will: And, The ſending His Beloved Innocent Son from the Manſions of Ineffible Bliſs, to ſuffer that Ignominious Death on the Croſs, [a vaſt Incentive to our Love of *GOD*: By it He revealed the ſevereſt Juſtice, and the higheſt Mercy; the greateſt Hatred of Sin, and moſt fervent Love to Man,] that we may again enter in, if we pleaſe, to the Joy of our *LORD*.]

I ſhould now further diſcourſe on that Super-eminent *Sect.* 20.

eminent Excellence of GOD I before mention'd: For [though I have already prov'd, 'Tis your beſt way to Reſign to Him, or you cannot be in perfect Peace, or ſee Him Above; and, as another Incentive to your preſent and continued Union with HIM, I have aſſur'd you, He Loves you without Ends; That our Beſt Attempts rather need his Pardon, but cannot Profit Him, to whom we muſt ever be in debt, and after All, ſhould conclude we are *unprofitable Servants*, and that our Righ-
Iſa. 39. 6. teouſneſs is as *filthy Rags*,] I find it Needful, e're our miſtaken

miſtaken Minds will do themſelves Right: For, not the Knowledge only of our Exemption from Miſery, by this happy Compliance, will ſufficiently attract our Croſs-grain'd Wills; we muſt be often reminded, That there is in *GOD* what will repleniſh with Joys.

HE is then, that Immenſe Ocean of Over-flowing Good, that Eternal Supreme above All Vertues, that Father of Lights with whom is no *Variableneſs*, neither Shadow of Changing, whom the Moſt Dignify'd and Senſible Beings, the Holy Hierarchy of Angels, & Departed Souls, Jam. 1. 17.

who

Rev. 4. 10, 11. who *cannot Lye*, grant to be the only Juſt, and Wiſe, and Great God, is HE at whoſe Feet the Elders of Heaven, All-ſenſible of their own Unworthineſs, compar'd with HIS (even to Them) inconceivable Worth, caſt their glorious Crowns, rejoycing to confeſs HE is the *LORD*, Eternal Maker of ALL: HE it is of whoſe marvellous Worth the Courts of *Heaven* do continually ring with Ecſtacizing Airs from the Rev. 5. 11, 12. Hearts of Ten thouſand times Ten thouſand, and Thouſands of Thouſands of its moſt Charming Happy Choir [who for ever thus delight

delight to Celebrate their Light and Life] * thoſe Lovely Harmleſs Little Officers of *GOD*, whom the Prophet ſaw as much *(a) aſham'd* as pleas'd to ſtand round the Throne of *GOD*, diſſolv'd with Love of *Him*, ſhouting out, by turns, *Holy! Holy! Holy! LORD of HOSTS!* do intimate, by their frequent Repetitions, their Impoſſibility of doing Juſtice to *GOD*; and that they can *never* ſatisfie themſelves

* *Ch. & Ser. &c.*

(a) They were *aſham'd*, at their Comparative Deformity, and therefore they are repreſented as veiling their reſplendant Faces before the Preſence of the more Tranſporting GOD, *Iſa.* 6. 2.

ſelves enough in ſinging Praiſes to HIM! *HIM!* who beſides, is (as HE calls Himſelf) *The LORD, the LORD GOD, Strong, Merciful and Gracious, Long-ſuffering, and Abundant in Goodneſs and Truth, keeping Mercy for Thouſands, forgiving Iniquity*, &c. that will by no means clear the Guilty; and is ſo far beyond Deſcriptions, that the loftieſt Hyperbole's, and moſt exquiſite Figures of Rhetorick us'd by Men as well inſtructed as inflam'd and tranſported by that inacceſſible Light where *JEHOVAH* dwells, cannot arrive ſo far as I ſay, not to

Exod. 34. 6, 7.

to reach but ſo much as to approach the Subject they would pretend to ſolemnize!

But from this ſhort Deſcant on the Excellence of *GOD*, as the ſtrongeſt Incentive to your Reſignation to HIM; let me now inform you, *Philomuſe*, of thoſe Troubles you will be rais'd above, and the Ineſtimable Joys you will, even in this Life feel, by an entire Conſignation to that Holy WILL; only think it no Digreſſion that I tell you firſt; That, beſides a Preparative, the due Contemplation *Sect.* 21.

tion on that moſt happy Object I ventur'd to diſcourſe of above, will be to the Reception of thoſe unutterable Joys you may be bleſs'd with, it ſhould provoke you to a careful avoiding of *all Sin.*

Indeed, the Heroick Heathen could tell you, that, *Licet ſarem Homines ignoraturos & Deum ignoſciturum tamen peccare nollem ob peccati turpitudinem:* 'Though 'I were certain Men could 'never know, and God 'would ſurely forgive, I 'ſhould * *ſcorn* to Sin, for 'the Foulneſs and Diſhoneſty that attends it.'

Senec.

* How he hated Wilful Sins!

Doubt-

Doubtleſs, ſince 'tis directly contrary to the Nature of GOD, there can nothing more unfit our Intellects for Sublime Satisfaction, than the Tranſgreſſion of that Law enjoyn'd by GOD; or more Unman us, than the Commiſſion of what makes us ſo vaſtly Err from that Perfect *Ens* we ſhould be moſt ambitious to imitate! —*Oh! how can I do this great Wickedneſs, and ſin againſt GOD*? was the Juſt Queſtion of the Right Noble-Spirited *Joſeph* to his importunate Miſtreſs. I obſerve, 'tis the *Sin*, not the *Puniſhment* he ſticks at; as one that Gen. 39. 9.

that would have abominated the Crime, though there had been no Hell. And whereas, though the LORD himſelf had prepar'd the
Iſa. 6. — Prophet *Iſaiah* for that Viſion wherein he was Bleſs'd (as much as Mortality would permit) with an intuitive View of the Divine Majeſty, and a Hearing the Seraphick Spirits Harmonious Anthem, and thereby (though Mortal) he was ſo highly ſenſible of the Almighty's Worth, that he would fain have joyn'd [though he wanted Skill] in Conſort with the Heavenly Hoſt; he dar'd not, becauſe he was

was impure; nor could he enjoy that mighty Satisfaction would have flow'd from thence, had he been free from Sin; but was reduc'd to exclaim, by the diſmaying ſenſe of his Diſſimilitude from Them, *Wō is Me! for* Iſa. 6. 5. *I am undone, becauſe I am a Man of polluted Lips, and I dwell in the midſt of a People of polluted Lips; for mine Eyes have ſeen the* KING *and* LORD *of* HOSTS! I am led to conclude, That we muſt be as free as poſſible from wilful Tranſgreſſions, or we cannot enjoy the Beatifick Sight; and ſhould be terri-

bly afraid to preſume on pleaſing our ſelves by Anthems to God, unleſs we are firſt rightly prepar'd as HE has order'd and expects.

Sect. 22. When you have once, through a due Contemplation of what has been wrote, ſubmitted (as is told you) to the *Divine Will*, you cannot be inſnar'd by any Earthly Good: for you will know them well, and on their Excellencies then look down with Eyes as unconcern'd as Eagles, you may fancy, caſt on ſilly Glow-worms, after they have newly gaz'd on the Meridian Sun.

You

You cannot Sin with Pleaſure, *Philomuſe*, or Wilfully; and therefore you'll be free from thoſe Tormenting Stings of Conſcience trouble moſt, from ſervile fear of a Diſcovery, and inward mighty Shame.——

You need not dread the Horror of a Dying State, from ſad Reflexions on your vaniſh'd Days, or that you have not liv'd as *GOD* commanded you: No Accidents of Providence, how dark ſoever, will ſurprize your Mind; nor can you be, with Reaſon, long Concern'd (or ever Diſcompos'd) for any Loſs Below.

Sect. 23. For, by this near Conjunction of Your WILL to *GOD*'s you will, in time, find it nothing, to Deny your ſelf; ſince thereby you will be wholly devoted to *GOD*, and perfectly cleans'd from all that baſeſt Droſs of Self-iſhneſs, or Ends with which before you were unhappily alloy'd. So that 'tis impoſſible any thing ſhould happen tocauſeyour immoderate Grief; for you enjoy all your Deſires in General and Bulk, though not always, perhaps, in Retail. And whereas your greateſt Wiſh is, That *God*'s *Will be done*; your Aſſurance,

rance, That 'tis HE is the Supreme and Uncontroll'd Diſpoſer of Events, does perſwade you, *All* Accidents that can fall on you, are but exact Completions of His Divine WILL, and therefore of Your's, ſo far as 'tis compriz'd in *His*: And therefore His Diſpenſations to you, are, in effect, but the Acts of your own Will, with the ſuperlative Advantage of their being directed by Him who is Wiſdome, Power and Love.

Then you'll be convinc'd, *Sect.* 24. That *GOD* is Juſt in All, and that you have reaſon to

Bleſs HIM, with *Job.* —— Your Thoughts will then be
Job 1. 21. ſuch as theſe; —— *HE takes but His Own, and he lends us*
——*ib.* 2. 10. *All.* — *Shall we receive Good at the Hand of* GOD, *and ſhall we not receive Evil?* ——
1 Sam. 3. 18. Well! *'Tis the* LORD, *let Him do what ſeemeth Him*
Iſa. 63. 9. *good.* —— *He grieves not the Sons of Men willingly, but in all our Afflictions is* HIMSELF *Afflicted!* —and will
Heb. 4. 16. give us *Grace to help in time of Need.* —However, *Though*
Job 13. 15. *HE Kill me, yet will I Truſt in* HIM!

You will not be Concern'd, if you have not an immediate Return ſuitable to

to your Prayers to *GOD*: You'll remember the Parable told by Christ, —— Luk. 11. *from* v. 5. *to* v. 14. That HE is your Father, your peculiar Friend: That 'tis easier for an Affectionate Mother to forget her Darling and First-born Child, than for *God* to forget You: Though She should, yet cannot HE, He tells you so. — Isa. 49. 15.

The Heathen *Satyrist*, by Natural Reason, was so sure of this, that after deep Contemplation thereon, says * he (what I would not have dislik'd, for being forgot in it's proper place) —— *Sect.* 25. * *Juv.* &c.

Permittes Ipſis Expendere Numinibus Quid
Conveniat Nobis, Rebuſque ſit utile Noſtris:
Nam pro Jucundis Utilia quæque dabunt DI,
Charior eſt Illis Homo quam Sibi——&c.

Caſt All your Care upon the DEITIES,
THEY Love us Better than we do our ſelves,
And will, for Pleaſant things, what's fitteſt give.

Sect. 26. I aſcend now to that higheſt Advantage from *Reſignation to GOD*, the Enjoyment of HIM.

But

But as you cannot by a Book of *Anthems* be juſtly enamour'd of their Harmonious Sound, or the Delights they can cauſe, if you are not skill'd in Muſick, or at leaſt, have not heard them ſung, it is wholly impoſſible I ſhould, by all I can ſay, let you know ſo much of thoſe inexpreſſible, exquiſite Pleaſures (reſulting from that Union with the GOD of Love) as will in the leaſt degree Tranſport you [as you ought] with a Deſire for *Them*, unleſs you were capable to Enjoy, or had before Felt them.

An Illiterate Man may believe, indeed, when he ſees a Fam'd Author's Learned Book, it is certainly Fine; but he is no more capable to Enjoy, (leſs, ſure, to be affected with a bare Information that the Work is Great, (a Scholar's firſt degree of Pleaſure there-from,) the Satisfaction it affords an Intelligent Reader) than the World is, by only All the brave Expreſſions in it, the Comforts which proceed from the Preſence of GOD.

However, ſince, Bleſſed be GOD, (though as Men born Blind, cannot, by the beſt Deſcriptions, be made truly

truly ſenſible of the Difference of Colours, or the Comforts of Sight, no one in a wicked State can taſte the Pleaſures of Reſigning to GOD) All Men may conform, if they will, I ſhall now, I ſay [having perſuaded from thence] uſe my utmoſt Endeavour, we may, in ſome meaſure, conceive what I promis'd you ſhould, to excite thereto.

Thoſe Happy People then, *Sect.* 27. who are ſo united to their *GOD* of Love, (though not able to enjoy a full Fruition of HIM Below,) have their Eyes ſo fix'd by Contemplation

tion (that excellent Vehicle of the Mind, by which, like *Moſes* in the Mount, by an aſſiduous Converſe with *God*, it acquires a Laſting Luminouſneſs) on their Future * State, [where they will be perpetually ſwallow'd up in the perfect Comprehenſions of *GOD*, and inceſſantly, for-ever, be ſupremely Raviſh'd with the inconceivable Glories of His Divine and Superlative Beauty,] (that in their Voyage here to Heaven, (tho' they are Naturally frail as we, they are *ſo* pleas'd therewith) that the greateſt Excellencies here on Earth can at no time make

Exod. 34. 29,30, &c.

* Thoſe ἄῤῥητα ῥήματα, whereof who can here conceive?

make 'em glance aſide from that mighty Object of their Faith; but on it, with as much Intenſion their Eyes remain, as Chriſt's Diſciples on their Aſcending Saviour did, who were diverted therefrom, neither by the Preſence nor Reproof of even ANGELS themſelves. *Ye men of Gallilee, &c.*

Thoſe Bleſſed Perſons do poſſeſs their Souls in Peace; They ſhall not be afraid of Evil Tydings; for their Hearts are fix'd, and they enjoy the Contentments of an innocent Piety; are ſweetly bedew'd with the Influences of the Holy Spirit, and the Tranſports which ſhoot *Pſal. &c.*

ſhoot abroad in their Qualify'd Minds.

They are only troubl'd that they cannot Love *GOD* more, and are unable to contribute ſomething to the Happineſs of HIM that is *ſo* Good to *All*. It grieves them, indeed, to find themſelves reduc'd to be only Paſſive, and Receivers in the Commerce; but whereas they know HE has All things at Command, and is in (*a*) HIMSELF Supremely Happy, their Concern is turn'd into Joy, and they

(*a*) The Divine Nature [as the Epicurean *Lucretius* could own] is *Privata dolore omni, privata periclis. Ipſa ſuis pollens opibus*, &c.

breathe

breathe out their Souls in ſuch following Strains of the Holy St. *Auguſtin*, (till their Corruption has put on Incorruption, till they are launch'd into the Ocean of Eternity, and they *(a) ſhine* like the Sun in the Firmament Above, when they are ſurrounded with the GLORY of *GOD*, and will fully Hear and Enjoy thoſe (*b*) Pleaſant Things which *Eye has not ſeen, nor* 1 Cor. 2. 9

(*a*) *Putas qualis TUNC erit ſplendor Animarum, quando Solis Claritatem habebit Lux Corporum!* Aug. Ser. 12. in Verb. Apoſt.

(*b*) *Semper omnibus in mentem veniat HÆC Æterna fælicitas de cujus Excellentia ſi omnia dicta fuerint quibus omnium Hominum linguæ ſufficiant vix tamen infima ejus particula delibata fuerit.* Calv. Inſtit. l. 4. c. 25.

Ear

Ear heard, neither have enter'd into the Heart of Man to conceive.)

Sect. 28. * O *Lord!* thou King of Saints, theſe mighty Goods are the Rewards of thoſe that Pant for THEE, Thou Hope of him that faints! Thou Comfort of the Helpleſs Man! Thou Crown of Glory for the Conqueror! and Everlaſting Satisfaction for the Man that will Deny himſelf for THEE!

* S. *Auguſt. Med.* Lat.

When I conſider how Unreaſonable it is for us to look for Heaven, who take Delight in All on Earth, my Soul refuſes Comfort here Below,

Below, [my Deareſt *GOD!*] that I may live with *Thee!*

O Gracious Father, help me to contemn theſe worldly Toys! Make all things taſte to me like Gall, but Thee, thou Everlaſting, Only, Pleaſant Good! whoſe Preſence made the *holy Stephen* eſtimate thoſe Stones by which he dy'd, as ſweet: For whom St. *Lawrence* willingly expir'd upon the burning Coals; and the Apoſtles from the Counſel of the Jews departed, greatly pleas'd that they were worthy to endure Reproach for Thee. St. *Andrew* joyfully was crucify'd, becauſe he'd haſte to Thee. Therefore, Act. 5. 41.

the

the Chief of Thy Apoſtles choſe the Croſs; the other lov'd the Axe. St. *Bartholomew*, enamour'd of thy Beauty, willingly was Flea'd alive: And *John*, diſdaining Death, drank up the Poyſon'd Draught immediately. When *Peter* taſted Thee, forgetting all inferiour Things, like one beſide himſelf, acknowledg'd to be There, was good; and talk'd of Making Tents for Thoſe Above, that he might view Thee ſtill! ——— A Sight of Thee, O *Lord*, creates Delights ineffable! ——— When *Peter* was made ſenſible of Thee, how he contemn'd all other Things? — But,

— But, Oh! had he but ſeen THEE as THOU art, or thoſe Great Things Thou haſt laid up for Deficated Souls, what wou'd he then haveſaid! —Surely *he* taſted of that Spring of Life, who, in an Ecſtaſie, exclaims, *Oh! how Great is that Goodneſs which Thou haſt laid up for them which Fear THEE!* — And ſo had *he* who paſſionately ſaid, *Oh! taſte and ſee how Good the LORD is!* ——— In Hopes of this my Maker, *GOD*, we always are at War: For THEE we're Killed every Day, that We may Live with THEE!

Again:

Again:

Sect. 29. I am in Love with *Thee*, my Deareſt *GOD!* and vehemently Long to Love *Thee* more and more; for truly, *LORD*, Thou'rt Sweeter than the Honey-comb; more Nouriſhing than any thing that is, and more Reſplendant than the glorious Sun; and therefore all the pureſt Gold the World contains, the fineſt Silver, and moſt precious Gemms, I value leſs than Nothing, in reſpect of *Thee!* — Now I am Raviſh'd with Thy Excellence, and Thoughts of the Sublime Delights the Beauty

Beauty of Thy Palace will Tranſport Me with. —— Oh, how I ſcorn theſe counterfeit, deſtroying, greateſt Goods Below! — Oh, Everlaſting Mighty Flame of Love! Inflame Me, yea, Inflame Me wholly with a Perfect Love of *Thee!* —— Oh, wretched is that Man, unleſs he loves the Creatures, purely for Thy ſake! —— Oh, that I could but Love *Thee* as I would, becauſe Thou lov'ſt me firſt! — Can Men or Angels juſtly Praiſe the *LORD*? or any thing declare Thy mighty Love to Me! — *Thou*, out of Nothing, madeſt Me much

much above the Senſible and Things Inanimate, a little lower than Angelical Exiſtences, after Thine Own Incomparable Form, and breathed in Me Thy Breath, my SOUL; created'ſt All Things for my Uſe, and ſtill continueſt (though I've often forfeited) my Life, that I might come to *Thee!*

Again:

Sect. 30. How Happy is that Soul that's once let free! that's out of Priſon, rid of that depreſſing Load, its Body! — ſwifter than Thought, 'twould fly, and pierce the Clouds, but to be link'd to *Thee!* —

Thee! — where She would eagerly for ever *Gaze* on *Thy* Tranſporting Beauty, *LORD* of Lords! where She would over-look the Raviſh'd Cherubims as they are paſſionately ſinging HALELUJAH's to the *GOD* of *LOVE!* and joyn in Conſort with the Mighty Hoſt, till She's Intoxicated with the Glories of the Place, the Pleaſant Odours, and Tranſporting Sounds rebounding in the Vaſt Celeſtial Courts, in Praiſe of *THEE*, O *GOD* of *JESU*, Saviour of the World! —— O Bleſſed! Bleſſed are the Citizens of Heaven Above! How the Com-

Communion of Saints would Comfort me! There we ſhould think what Troubles we endur'd on Earth, but how Rewarded Now, where we ſhall never be offended more! What Inſtruments! What Anthems! What Divine Melodious Compoſitions of the Heavenly Symphoniſts will THERE be ever heard! [And, Oh! how Charming do the Angels look, whilſt They are Raviſh'd with their Object, *GOD!*]

There is no Want, no Shame, no Diſcontent, no Need of Pardon, Fear or Puniſhment: But There is Perfect

Perfect Peace, and Love, and Joy; for there is GOD, Reſt, Everlaſting Satisfaction in the *Holy Ghoſt!* —— Oh! that I could but hear the Angels Antiphones to HIM! But more than Happy ſhould I be, if I could chant forth one of thoſe Exhilerating Songs of *Sion* to the *LORD!* —— Oh! that the Time was come, when I might ſo employ my ſelf!

Again:

Moſt Merciful Endearing Father, *GOD!* who haſt ſo Loved, ſo Enlighten'd, ſo Exalted Us, how Sweet are Thoughts of *Thee!* —— *Sect.* 31.

The more I do Contemplate *Thee*, the Sweeter and the more Admirable *Thou* art to Me! and therefore I do love to often Think on *Thee!* inceſſantly deſire to See Thy Beauty in this Vail of Tears, and be Belov'd by *Thee!*

O *Lord*, Thou haſt Inflam'd Me, and I Burn! I greatly Long to come and be with *Thee!* I am beſide my ſelf, almoſt, with vehement Deſire to See Thy Face! —— I am reſolv'd to ſtand upon my Guard, to keep my ſelf awake, and always ſing away the Time in Praiſe, in Praiſe of *Thee!* — I'll pierce the Skyes with my Entreaties,

Entreaties, and will fancy I am with *Thee* Now! Only my Body, then, can be in Pain, my Heart is with my Dear Beloved Treaſure there Above!

But, *Lord*, I am Diſſatiſfy'd, I cannot Comprehend *Thee*, by my deepeſt Thoughts, aright! Thine Honour, Thy Divine Reſplendency, Thy Might, Thy Glory and Thy Majeſty, Thy Goodneſs and Thy Mercy! — every thing of *Thee* exceeds the Higheſt Intellect!

Again:

My Soul! were we to ſuf- *Sect.* 32.

fer daily Torments here on Earth; nay, were we for ſome Ages to endure the Fire of Hell, that we might ſee at laſt *Chriſt Jeſus*, and the Glory of the *Lord*, that we might be among the Saints at Reſt, with what Content we ſhould accept of All!

Let Hell, or all the Devils in it, do their worſt then, to me here: What tho' I'm Tempted, almoſt Starv'd for Want, Naked, conſtrain'd to Labour with my Hands, or Beg; if I can never Sleep, am always Sick, and all the World Abuſe me; I ſhall ſee my God; and

then

then ſhall ſhine with Everlaſting Light, when HE has made His *Jewels* up, to be with Him in Endleſs Joy!

Again:

My Conſcience tells me, *Sect.* 33.
Lord, that I have ſinn'd exceedingly; but yet I don't Deſpair: For though my Crimes abounded, GRACE aboundeth more. — That Miſerable Man that fears he never ſhall be Pardon'd, does deny that *GOD* is Merciful, ſo wrongs the Holy One. The Father of the Univerſe is Love, is Powerful, is Truth; ſo that I faint not,

though I went aſtray. — I doubt not of his Love, but He'll accept of Me; nor of His Truth, but He will keep his Word; nor of His Power, but He can Redeem. —— Sometimes the Enemy, indeed, will make me queſtion, Why, but what am I, that I ſhould look for ſuch a Happineſs as Heaven? Why ſhould I hope for what I never yet deſerv'd? But I have thought again, I know in whom I Truſt: *GOD* has adopted me his Son; His Promiſes are ſtedfaſt, He can never change, and is Omnipotent. I am not terrify'd with a Re-

Reflexion on my Wicked Life, when I conſider, that *Chriſt Jeſus* dy'd to ſave ſuch Men as I: — Surely, my Sins do not exceed his Sufferings; the Nails by which He hung upon the Croſs, the Spear that pierced his Bleſſed Side, cry out to me, Fear not; if you will Love the Father, he is throughly Reconciled to you: *Longinus* Open'd me a Way to Satisfaction, by the Wound He made. —— *O yee of little Faith*; But, *Love the Lord!* Love turneth Fear away. —— Chriſt ſtretched out His Arms upon the Croſs, to ſignifie, He's ready to

Embrace Returning Prodigals. ——

Again:

Sect. 34. Oh, Thou Incomprehenſible, Eternal Source of Good! let Thy Abundant Mercy flow on me! —— Rouze up, my Soul! uncloud thy ſelf, and with thy utmoſt Underſtanding labour to Contemplate what a Sea of All-ſufficiency [how Beautiful and Happy] is the *LORD!* If every ſeveral Thing be ſo Delectable, how Pleaſant! how Delightful! certainly, is *That* Almighty Being, *God*! which in Himſelf enjoys the QUINTESSENCE

ESSENCE of every Real GOOD! If Creatures are ſo Charming, *Lord!* what Mortal can endure a Sight of *THEE*, and not be melted down! *THOU* Maker of ALL Things.——

Oh! *Philomuſe!* —— the Rays of the Divinity do now break in upon my Soul, —— I ſtagger, —— and have loſt my ſelf; —— I only can ſpare Time to ask you—— If the Spouſe's Bowels were ſo mov'd, when *CHRIST*,

Si Momentanea DEI viſio tantùm potuit apportare lætitiæ cumulum; Quid potuit viſio EJUS Æterna? Gerhar. *Med.* 48.

her Lover, did but put his Hand (here) thorough the Hole within the Door; how will her Soul be Raviſh'd, when ſhe ſees HIM as HE is, throughly, at once, without a Prejudicial Vail between, in that Celeſtial Paradiſe of *GOD!*

—— Think not, Oh, Think not more of theſe Deluſive Joys on Earth! Immediately Reſign, and be with *GOD!* — There you ſhall hear *not* thoſe Harmonious Flouriſhes from Inſtruments play'd on by Men, which us'd to *ſo* Tranſport you from your *Self* on Earth, but Finer, much beyond

beyond Conception, —— Angels Compoſitions for the *KING* of Kings, the *GOD* of Melody! Exceding what we can expect ſhould ebriate the Perfectneſs of Beings, SAINTS Above!

Farewell.

(*M. Coll. Octob.* 3. 1694. *Oxford.*)
[Æ. M. 18.]

Δόξα ἐν ὑψίστοις Θεῷ.

FINIS.

THE

AN APPENDIX.

BY what has been said, we find it truly Reasonable that, even for our own sakes we set not our Affections too much on Things Below, but Resign up our Wills to the Will of GOD, for thereby we shall in THIS Life be Bless'd with that PEACE which the World cannot give, and may be infallibly assur'd that we shall perfectly enjoy the Superlative *Good* in HEAVEN. HEAVEN! a Composition of such Eternal Charms as are beyond the Skill of ANGELS to Express! to

Men?

Men? nay ONE ANOTHER perfectly, tho they are most Intelligent? HEAVEN! a Place of Ecstacy so great, as yields us every Real Good but Tongues to tell our Joys!— We are so full of them! HEAVEN! I say! at which when we are once arriv'd, we shall not so much as fancy 'mongst our then transporting Pleasures, that 'tis HEAVEN's the Seat of Them! so far our NOBLEST Thoughts of IT on Earth fell short of what we see!

Now, The Way by which we may conform our Wills to the Will of GOD, is by having an Humble and True Opinion of our own Nothingness compar'd with the unconceivable Majesty of Almighty GOD which may restrain us from every Sin.

That

That we might Thus think of our ſelves; was the Deſign of ſome part of the METHOD in the former Diſcourſe, yet the Queſtion ſtill is HOW, after we have this Humble Opinion of our ſelves, we may be perfect in our Reſignation to GOD as much as Mortality can without Danger of Revolt? or, How a Habit of Sin may be perfectly Broken?

In general then, and to be very Brief, according to St. *Paul*'s Advice, and the Opinion of the Church. By a conſtant Mortification of our ſelves. By always denying our ſelves principally that Evil to which we ſeem moſt enclin'd. By ever avoiding the Incentives to Vice, Evil Converſation, and Exceſs in the Neceſ-

ſaries or Reaſonable Diverſions of this Life. Or thus: By living only in perpetual Temperance; Contemplative, according to the Excellent Example of the Holy JESUS and the incomparable Rules which GOD's Wiſdom in the Scriptures Enjoyn'd.

Without Theſe, we may in vain talk of the Folly of Vice, and inveigh againſt the Licentious Man! The next new Aſſault like a Torrent overwhelms OUR Senſe, and WE are Born away from our Uſe of Reaſon, with the tempting Cheat!

I heartily wiſh we would all live Thus: Certainly we ſhould not only be freer from corporal Pains, but thoſe frettings of the Soul which attend a leſs heedful Life. We ſhould be deliver'd from that Curſe of God: which

which cuts us off e'er half our days are ſpent, and be made happy with thoſe inward mighty JOYS I ſo often mention. That PEACE which Exceeds the greateſt Pleaſure from the ſtrongeſt and moſt loſty Lines of Senſe! more charming than the moſt Exalted Raviſhments of the fineſt Strains! Nay! than the Comforts of Friendſhip in Perfection! A PEACE——? —Ineffable!

B. Pratt.

Reader, *The Author not being consulted till too late, some literal Faults and Mispointings have still escaped sight, which you are desired to censure friendly, and with these correct*

EPist. Ded. p. 2. l. 3. r. *hanc*. p. 26. l. 9. for *its* r. *their*. ibid. l. 10. r. *resint*. p. 61. for *perfect Ens*, r. *compleatest Being*. p. 34. by the word *FATR* in the margin, r. *GOD*. p. 60. l. 11. r. *Seirem*. p. 70. l. 6. r. *qu que*. p. 85. l. 17. r. *O!* p. 95. l. 17. r. *poterit*. p. 96. l. 2. for *through* r. *by*. p. 97. l. 6. r. *PERFECTEST*. in Post. p. 6. l. 8. after *contemn* r. *and want it not*.

Dele [s] *superfluous at the ends of Words, and contract others for their better sound.*

* These *Crotchets* [ ] are us'd here as they ought; *i. e.* when the Sense is particularly to be observ'd.

THE *POSTSCRIPT.*

A *LETTER* from, and its *ANSWER* to a *Critick* who perus'd the Written Copy of this Book, without the Author's Knowledge, through the Gentleman's Pleasure to whose Care the Impression was consign'd. They are *both* as follows:

Mr. *P--tt*,

Mr. *P--tt*,

MY Knowledge of YOU, was the Reason I Importun'd and Prevail'd with the Unwilling Mr. M. for a Sight of the Book you were about to Print.---- I tell you, Sir, you are a Gentleman, indeed, of an Admir'd Life, Ingenuity and Language, but not well acquainted with the World, or a Lady's Humour yet: All

The Poſtſcript.

All the Sex love to be [*tho' they know they are*] Flatter'd, *and I never heard of one yet, who was above an* Encomium *from You* —— *I Diſlike too that Expreſſion in your Proem to the Piece. viz.* You ſhall not value the Cenſure of Men : —— *You ſhould Value* All *that Good Men ſay, and I wiſh you had been Plainer on a Thought or two in this Pretty Work; I cannot comprehend them well at firſt.*

Pardon

The Postscript.

Pardon (if it be needful) this Effect of a Hasty Survey; I had the Copy but a Night, and could not have an Opportunity to interrupt you in time, before now I am least prepar'd.

I am,

Truly Your's,

---- *L' S.*

Sion Coll. Lond. 9⅘.

The

The Poſtſcript.

The Author's Anſwer.

SIR,

'I Thank you for your 'Laſt: I never yet ſaw 'a Book ſo Excellent, but 'by an *Hypercritick* [ſuch as 'you] it might be Cavil'd at. 'You expected not, ſure, to 'ſee *Mine* without Fault.——

'As to your particular '*Objections*, I tell you, Sir, 'firſt, [with leave,] you're 'Miſtaken: There are ſome 'of the Female Sex to whom '*Flattery* is as Nauſeous as 'it

'it would be to you, or 'that Expreſſion of your's 'to moſt of them, who Value 'themſelves only on their 'own Deſerts, and are a-'bove an *Encomium*, though 'from you your ſelf; for 'they Contemn it, (as you 'may know, if you pleaſe.)

'You tell me, in your 'Poſtſcript, you *ſurvey'd* '*the Book in Haſte*: I Be-'lieve you, [ſo do moſt of 'Your Excellent Parts:] 'I'm ſure, had you deli-'berately perus'd the * Ex-'preſſion [*I think I ſhall* '*not be ſo vain, to value* '*the Cenſures of All,*] and

* *Pag.* 3.

'con-

'conſider'd then, *that* in 'the *Epiſtle* to the *Worthy* 'Reader, [*I deſire* Their 'Friendly *Cenſure thereon*,] 'you would not therefore 'have found Reaſon to Diſ-'like, or from thence con-'clude, I contemn'd the Cen-'ſures of the *Good*.

'I referr you to the *Preface* 'next; (let what has already 'been ſaid, ſuffice for this 'Manual here.) —— Thoſe '*Thoughts* you complain of, 'may with Eaſe be under-'ſtood by Conſidering Men: 'If it had pleas'd you to 'ſuſpend Reflexion till you 'had read them a ſecond

'time,

The Postscript.

'time, you had been better
'prepar'd to judge, and
'needed not to ask Pardon
'of Obliging,

SIR,

Your Servant
to Command,

Oxford,
Jan. 21.
169⅘.

——— P--tt.

THE END.

READER, These following Faults have escap'd the Press.

IN the *Epist. Ded.* page 2. line 12. read *have*: p. 15. l. 17. r. *through*: p. 38. l. 12. r. *couclude*: p. 42. l. 11. after *please* a period, no point after *Commands* in l. 12: p. 53. l. 7. r. *Ineffable*: p. 56. l. 3. a Colon after *Great*, no point after *God*: p. 60. l. 11. r. *scierem*: p. 80. l. 7. a period after *Draught*, no point after *immediately* in l. 8: p. 81. l. 2. put a comma after *THEE*: p. 85. l. 17. r. *O! JESU!*